

## AN INFIDEL'S REPLY.

(From Buffalo Review.)  
Editor Buffalo Review:  
"Rome has spoken, the case is ended."

For centuries the people dared not dispute this maxim. Then the infidel Luther threw off the yoke which infallibility had imposed, and today we seem to have moved forward a pace and the scepter is given over to Protestantism. In this particular case Dr. C. E. Locke has spoken and infidelity has received a scouring worthy a more deserving cause.

The question of the Sunday opening of the Pan-American Exposition has been declared in the affirmative and placed beyond argument, but, if I may be granted space, I wish to correct a few of the misstatements made by Dr. Locke in the Review of February 25, in which he attacks infidelity, and evidently expects assertion to do duty as argument; his denunciation of ideas which disagree with his conception of belief and disbelief would cause Sixtus IX of the Inquisition to exclaim: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Dr. Locke says: "Infidelity is not entitled to a respectful hearing on this question of Sunday closing because it has always been opposed to our most sacred institutions." It is well for us that our infidel forefathers established this government to be of, by and for the people, instead of by and for Christians, else infidels would not be given even a disrespectful hearing and our voices would be silenced as were the voices of the heretics (infidels) during the dark ages.

Some weeks ago there was a symposium by scholars in regard to the ten books which had made the greatest impression on the thought of the past century. All the writers agreed that Darwin had produced the masterpiece. The book which teaches our natural, instead of supernatural, origin, and, therefore, overthrows the Bible theory of creation, and its teaching is accepted by enlightened humanity throughout the world. Evolution is being taught from many orthodox pulpits to day, and is accepted by the credulous congregations as though their sect were the originator. Darwin was an infidel and has moved the world, yet we are told that infidels are not entitled to a respectful hearing on Sunday closing. Are not men like Galileo, Huxley, Haeckel, Mill, Spencer, Emerson, Watt, Franklin, Roentgen and Edison, who have spoken to the world through their works for humanity, instead of through the thunder of cannon, the tramp of armies and the clash of weapons of war—entitled to a respectful hearing? They do not take refuge behind Comstock laws, passed at midnight on Saturday at the close of a session; their acts need no justification. These, together with thousands of other brave infidels, have secured to us the liberty we enjoy.

I think infidels can conscientiously plead guilty to being opposed to "sacred institutions." They are too nearly related to the "Holy Inquisition." But does Dr. Locke mean to imply that there are degrees of holiness when he says "most holy institutions?" In what degree do they become unholy?

Again we are told that "infidelity disregards the ten commandments." Let us see. In France there is a society of Atheists numbering 20,000, yet DeBov's review of the census shows that there are 19,535 Christian converts, 164 Mohammedans and Jews, but not a single Atheist. In England (1873) there were over 151,000 Christian converts in the prisons, but only 379 non-religious. In the Illinois State penitentiary over 95 per cent of the inmates are Christians. These few references to statistics will show who is disregarding the ten commandments.

"Infidelity has no standard of morality." Dr. Sanger's report of prostitution in New York states that over 95 per cent of fallen women are Christians, and other cities show a like proportion. In England, where the church is established by law, Lady Henry Somerset tells us that thousands of shares of brewery stock are held by the Bishops. Rev. W. T. Brown, of Rochester, N. Y., says: "The British government maintains a regular system of prostitution and seeks out from the rural districts healthy, pure, clean girls and under deliberate misrepresentation sends them to India to be placed at the disposal of its soldiers at a stipulated schedule of prices." Custer Henderson, in Cherokee Democrat, writes from Manila: "Last October there were brought here from China 800 Chinese women, who are installed in houses, some for private soldiers and some for officers. Each inmate pays a tax of \$4 to the military authorities, which includes license to sell liquor. These houses are decorated inside and out with the Stars and Stripes, and at night the streets are a mass of drunken, half-naked women and American soldiers." If this is Christian morality, I, for one, am glad the infidels have not acquired it.

"Infidelity builds no school houses, sustains no philanthropic institutions." Over a hundred years ago our Constitutional Congress began the work of liberal education by setting apart land of the public domain for school purposes. Taxation for the same is borne equally, whether Christian or infidel. The church opposed the public school in the beginning, and the Catholic wing still opposes it with a bitterness which shows its fear of enlightenment, but Protestants see the policy of endorsing it, and are already posing as the originator and sole supporter of the system. The church strenuously opposed the liberation of slaves, which can be verified by reference to reports of its conferences, and its Bishops favor our war of conquest. John Wesley, the saint of Methodism, believed in the divine right of kings and opposed the revolutionary struggle. It seems inconsistent for Dr. Locke to say that infidelity builds no schools when one of the most liberally endowed in the United States was founded by an infidel but has been invaded by Christians. And what of Peabody and Cooper and Carnegie in regard to hospitals, while many of them are claimed by Christians their exemption from taxation makes all citizens supporters of them and nearly all are supported by popular contributions, it is only fair to conclude that infidels are cheerful givers. There is one kind

of construction, however, which infidels have never engaged in, and that is the erection of scaffolds, the building of funeral pyres, the making of racks and garrotes and thumb-screws which have served the Christians so well in the propagation of their belief.

"Infidelity is utterly out of harmony with the Creator's purpose in making this beautiful world." Dr. Locke must be a reincarnation of Jehovah and 6,000 years old, as he seems to be familiar with the plans and purposes of the Creator. The infidel makes no claim to divine kinship, but is satisfied if he is able to serve the poor, oppressed human beings about him, and if all ideals are from God, as Dr. Locke asserts, the ideal of the infidel must emanate from the same source, and, though differently expressed, the unbeliever should be entitled to a respectful hearing or any and all subjects.

Wendell Phillips says in substance: "I desire but two words carved on my tombstone—Infidel and Traitor. Infidel to a church which sanctions the trading in human flesh and traitor to a government which sustains it."

HARRIET M. CLOSZ.  
Webster City, Iowa.

## TOLSTOI, THE GREAT INFIDEL.

If Christianity stands for love and justice and humanity, as it pretends, why is it that the head Bishop of the Greek church does not cry out against Russian persecution, slavery, and brutality as imposed by the state upon the common people of that country?

Compare his unfeeling attitude with that of the infidel Tolstoi. As in all nations and in all times, it is the infidel who first cries out for redress of human wrongs. It is in the infidel heart that pity builds her throne.

The spectacle of Count Tolstoi appealing to the Czar in behalf of the peasantry of his oppressed country, is one of the heroic events that will live in history. It is all the more heroic when we consider that freedom of speech is almost unknown in Russia, and that he who dares to utter his honest thought is in danger either of exile, Siberia or death. The people of Russia have endured their persecutions for so long that at last human nature is rebelling, and the country is said to be on the verge of revolution. Under such conditions Count Tolstoi dares to address his monarch in this defying manner:

"Why will you fight with what you can never subdue by force instead of covering your name with imperishable fame by treading in the way of justice? You protect injustice, sire. Free the peasant from the brutal tyranny of officials. Give him equal rights with other ranks. Do away with the present police system, which demoralizes society, degrades the empire and breeds spies and informers. Do away with the restraints on education so that the road to enlightenment may lie open to all. Prohibit no man from having his free belief only."

All honor to brave Tolstoi. The people of Russia (and of the whole world) will honor him when his Czar and Bishops are swallowed up in oblivion.

The world is fast coming to know that freedom, and not religion, is the remedy for poverty and ignorance and crime. It is fast coming to know that religion is only used as a cloak to cover the crimes of Kings and those high in authority in republics. The Russian peasantry, largely through the teachings of Tolstoi, have now reached the point where they do not fear to speak out for themselves, and to organize. Many of the educated classes and most of the students sympathize with them.

It is only a question of time until they will arise en masse and demand their rights. If they will have the good judgment to march straight upon St. Petersburg and cut a lot of royal and sacred throats, and cut a few thousand other privileged individuals out of the country, it will be the easiest and most humane remedy that can be employed. Nothing but a French revolution will ever right affairs in Russia. The aristocrats and Bishops, the cause of the troubles, should be the ones to suffer and to lose their lives. The common people have suffered enough. Enough of them have been exiled, and died on the scaffold, and in dungeons and in Siberian mines. Tolstoi has well illustrated that infidelity and not Christianity is the savior of mankind. All honor and all praise to his great name.

J. B. W.

## ATTENTION, PRESS WRITERS.

Provincetown, Mass., April 25, 1901.  
Press Writers, attention! Armstrong, Groh and McBride, having annihilated the Christian bigots in the columns of the Boston Traveler, are now engaged in the same task in the Boston Globe, the paper that has the largest circulation in New England. Let all hands write to the Globe—if for publication the proper form is "To the Editor of the People's Column"—and congratulate the editor on his liberality in opening his columns to a debate of this nature, assuring him at the same time that the discussion is attracting wide attention. If you don't have time to write a letter put a few lines on a postal, anyway or anything, to let the editor know you are interested in the contest and watching it.

J. T. SMALL.

P. S.—Sunday observance is the question that is being argued.

## NAUGHTY SKY-PILOT.

Rev. Marion Jones, Methodist, ran off from South Lebanon, O., with the wife of Emerson H. Stephens and in his church.

Jones soon abandoned her and she came back to find that her husband had gotten a divorce. In the resurrection whose woman will be?

## AN UNGODLY PAIR

## Break into a Salvation Army Recruiting Office.

Louisville, Ky., March 24, 1901.

Editor Moore:  
I had quite an amusing experience here in Louisville, this evening. Strolling down Jefferson street with a friend of mine, our attention was attracted by a large sign that hung in the hallway of a building. It was attached to a chandelier, and read thus: "Mission: all welcome."

I proposed that we enter, as I am a missionary myself, having had the honor of directing the work of the "Young Men's Progressive League" of Cincinnati, Ohio, all last summer, acting as its president.

My friend acquiesced. When we entered they were singing "There will be no dark valley when Jesus comes," and the gay old boy on the rostrum did us the honor of leaving his place to personally deliver each a book of gospel hymns, and throughout the service seemed to have us spotted as promising subjects.

He delivered an address full of fire and brimstone, blended with bad grammar. At the end of the address he asked the audience to rise and sing "Throw out the life line," and announced that he and the workers would seek those who were present, yet not within the fold.

This old hypocrite, in the course of his remarks, had stated that he had, at one time, been the worst man in Louisville. He has been a professional gambler, a thief, a drunkard; yea even a murderer. I believe his name is Holcombe.

They made for us. I occupied a seat next the wall, so my friend was the first victim. The old reprobate put his polluted arm around the neck of my friend, who never was guilty of a single crime, to my knowledge, and the sight of this old self-confessed murderer embracing my friend made my blood boil. He wanted to know if my friend if he was saved, and my friend answered "No."

He told me afterward that his desire was to lead him on.

Then the preacher murderer said he had been watching him all evening, and was struck by his face. He said he had a good face, and that it bore an honest stamp, and he was going to pray for him. He said "My beloved brother, I will pray that you can not sleep tonight, that you will toss and turn on your bed all night, and not sleep a wink, that you will get up in the morning feeling ill and without an appetite. I will pray God to make you so miserable that you will cry in agony to him for mercy, and then you will begin to live a life of purity, joy and true happiness for you will know your God."

My friend told him to pray, and if his prayer was answered, he would be there the following night and proclaim that a

Then it was my turn, but from a different source. The old murderer was engrossed with my friend, and the one that took me in hand was a nice mild looking fellow, with a sweet smile rippling over his features, making him look as pleasant and inviting as the waters of the Ohio touched by a summer's breeze.

Then there was the following dialogue:

He—"Are you a Christian?"  
I—"I am not."  
He—"Don't you want to be one?"  
I—"I have no such desire."  
He—"Where do you expect to spend eternity?"  
I—"Nowhere."  
He—"Where do you expect your soul to go to?"  
I—"I have none."  
He—"What?"  
I—"I said I have none."  
He—"But my dear friend do you not believe in God?"  
I—"I do not."

Then another fellow chimed in and said, "Don't you believe in the Bible?" I said, "I do not."

And they asked in chorus, for the whole gang was around us now, "Why don't you believe in the Bible?" I answered, "Because it is a mass of contradictions and absurd fairy tales."

"Fairy tales!" they cried in a chorus.  
"Yes," I answered, "for instance my friends, if I came to you and told you that a lady friend of mine had given birth to a baby boy; that this lady friend was a virgin, and continued a virgin, even after giving birth to this child, would you not consider that a fairy tale?"

They did not answer but stood gaping open-mouthed, and I continued, saying: "Jesus of Nazareth was no more a God than you or I, and if he lived hellish as man, was born as man, died as man, and his flesh decayed just as will my flesh."

Some one said: "I know that my redeemer liveth."

I answered saying: "If you know that prove it to me and I will believe."

The preacher murderer said: "Blessed are they who believe, yet see not."

I answered: "But that is not the way Jesus is said to have answered Thomas. When Thomas declared he would not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead, Jesus appeared and told Thomas to place his hand in the wound in his side."

"Now," I declared, "I am another Thomas and I want to know that my redeemer liveth."

"Come my friends," I said, "pray for me and I will pray with you, let us test the truth of this doctrine, let us pray that Jesus shall appear and show me his wounds," and then I, like Thomas, will believe."

And the dam hypocrites and fools answered: "The age of miracles is past." Then I said: "Your God has changed, he does not love his children as he did

in the days of Thomas. He performed a miracle to save the soul of Thomas, and he refuses to do a like service for myself and friend. If there was such a God I would despise him, and so should you."

I said as I turned and faced the minister, "I am not a murderer, a thief, a gambler or drunkard, and never shall be as long as nature leaves me in possession of my reason."

"I have absolutely no respect for a man guilty of these things, and would not trust him as far as I can throw a stone. I would not take a life, for it is of all crimes the greatest. I prize your life because I prize my own. I love you, not because I love God, for there is no God, but because I love you, my own kind."

"An injury done to one is an injury done to all, and the effects of a crime against humanity can no more be wiped out by the blood of Jesus, than could the dirty walls of this room be painted with the water of the Ohio river."

This seemed enough for them, they began to gently shove us toward the door. I suppose they thought I was getting too personal, for the walls of that room were sadly in need of something. So we politely bid them good night, but they did not answer.

B. S. FRAYNE.

## NO. 3.

## FROM REV. GARATT.

Uvalde, Texas, April 14, 1901.

Editor Moore:

Dear Sir—I have received copies of the Blade with my first article correctly printed and your comments on the same. As you have used more space in your reply than was occupied by my article, I presume you will allow me a few words by way of rejoinder. And now, let us keep the object of our controversy constantly in mind and remember that we are fellow mortals trying to help each other to clearer views of truth.

Pardon me for saying, that to begin with, you seem to have mistaken my introduction for my argument.

In viewing the Brooklyn bridge, you have, doubtless, been struck with the length and magnitude of the approaches. As the question of the Divine existence is one of the most stupendous that the human mind has to grapple with, I think you should not object to my prefacing my argument on that subject with an introduction less than a quarter of a column in length.

My argument all follows the quotation from St. Paul. It is the old argument of design in nature and I could not be strictly honest without giving credit, as I did, to the preacher who used it first. You seem to object to my quoting from Paul and yet you quote from Ingersoll. As you are an apostle of liberalism, let us be liberal in our discussion. You are at liberty to quote from Ingersoll, Paine, Voltaire or any other writer of note and I shall claim for myself the same privilege. However, if you object to my using a Bible quotation as the text of my initial argument, I will say that my text is the shin bone of an infidel. This ought to satisfy the most radical of your readers. I take the human frame and the bicycle frame and place them side by side and contend that both, by the wise arrangement of the material which they contain, show the work of an intelligent designer. You say that this argument is weak; but I say that it is strong, and that no clearer deduction can possibly be made from visible phenomena. Then we have mind and matter and the question of precedence confronts us something must have existed first. Mind is, evidently, superior, to matter for it controls matter. A stream does not rise above its source, and it is more reasonable to conclude that mind evolved matter than that matter evolved mind. It is more reasonable to conclude that that which is superior was precedent than to assume the contrary.

Your objection to the watch illustration on account of its age does not hold good. There are some things which improve with age and this is one of them. Moreover, a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is required to bring forth things both new and old."

And now, a few words about your attempt to impeach the goodness of God. You say: "If the world (earth) as the workmanship of God is the best that God can do, then God as a worker for man's happiness is far inferior to man as a worker for man's happiness."

But both the telescope and the Bible inform us that the earth is not God's best world. The astronomers tell us there is a world which has four moons instead of one, and presumably, has "moonlight every night." And God calls the earth his "footstool," which signifies its inferiority. In regard to your enumeration of earthly evils, I will simply remind you that God's commentary on the book of nature tells us that since man became a sinner the face of nature has been changed to correspond with man's character. We belong to a sinful race, consequently, partakers of good and evil. But the good outweighs the evil.

In reply to your proposed improvements on this world, I must tell a short story about life in Texas. In a certain field in Texas there once lived a rabbit, a jackass, and an infidel. Now, God had provided grass to feed the rabbit and the jackass and apples and oranges to feed the infidel. But the jackass, who had a broad mouth, got more than his share of the grass; and the rabbit who was small and timid had a little more became lean and miserable. So God made a special provision for the rabbit. He made the prickly pear and placed on its broad, thick leaves some thorns to keep the jackass from eating it up.

Then the rabbit thrust his nose be-

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tween the thorns, filled his belly with the pear and was thankful and happy. Now, the infidel was tall and learned and capable of appreciating higher things than food. So God made a special provision for the happiness of the infidel. He made a beautiful red rose and loaded it with fragrance and planted it beside the path which the infidel was wont to follow in his daily walks. And to keep the greedy jackass, who had no eye for beauty, from devouring it before the infidel got up in the morning, He put thorns on the bush around the rose. After a while, the infidel came that way and saw the rose; but he did not pause to admire its beauty or inhale its fragrance. He hurried past simply remarking that he thought it was a damn mean God who wouldn't make roses without thorns.

I will close by referring to one more point in your reply. You say "If God could make a perfect body (for man) and did not do it, he is neither perfectly wise nor perfectly good." I contend that the fact that God did not make a perfect body for man in the first stage of his existence, is a proof that He is perfectly wise and perfectly good. A wise and good father never gives his son all that he intends or is able to give him when that son first starts in business. The chief benefaction comes after the son's failure and failure have been tried. I firmly believe, dear editor, that He designs to ultimately give you and me bodies more perfect and more glorious than those possessed by the angel Gabriel, and my prayer is that you may not defeat the beneficent design of your Creator.

Fraternally Yours,  
J. F. GARATT.

## EDITORIAL COMMENT.

There are but few things in your letter that need any reply.

There is great difference between the way you quote Paul and the way I quote Ingersoll. You quote Paul as being inspired and infallible, while I quote Ingersoll as a fallible man. I think Paul's opinion about religious matters is not so good as Ingersoll's because Ingersoll knew much more than Paul did.

It is not true that "Something must have existed first." Everything may have existed always. It is just as easy for me to believe that you and I, or a hog or a rock, have existed always as that God has existed always. If you have not existed always when did you begin to exist? Is there an atom of anything in your body that was made out of nothing specially to be put into your body?

It is not true that "Mind is evidently superior to matter." Mind is simply a function of organized matter; and therefore there could not have been any mind before there was any matter. Matter evolved mind, just as the eye evolved sight. There never was any sight until there was an eye, and there never was any mind until there was a brain, or ganglion or some material thing that did the thinking. You cannot conceive of a thought as making a brain but you do daily conceive of a brain making a thought.

The telescope does not tell us that there is any better world than this, but for the sake of argument we will assume that there is a better world than this. If that better world has in it no intelligent beings it was silly in God to make it. If it has, in it, intelligent beings it was not just and fair for God to provide for one part of his children better than he did for the others.

It is inaccurate to assert that the face of nature has been changed to correspond with man's character. All the crimes that men can commit would not make one earthquake. The war against the Chinese did not produce the Galveston flood.

All of Ingersoll's infidelity and blasphemy could not make one streak of lightning. The whole Christian world prayed for Garfield and did not reduce his pulse one beat or his temperature one degree. You would have just as good health if you prayed to a totem pole or telephone pole or stump or Chinese god as you have now praying to your particular God. My life is just as satisfactory to me as yours is to you and I never pray at all. I am much happier than I used to be when I was praying nearly all the time. The many men who

have succeeded in Lexington and everywhere else were all Christians. God does not care as much for a man as he does for a mouse.

If something should kill every human being on the earth, the sun and moon would keep on doing business at their same old stands, and the seasons and the birds and the wild flowers come and go just like we were here to look at them.

Your telescope shows that the face of nature has been much perturbed in Mars, where nobody lives, as on the earth. People who prayed to Vishnu and Bel and Baal and Isis and Osiris, and Thor, and Wodin and Odin and Jupiter and Zeus and the Sun found just as much encouragement to pray as you do, and the old Irish woman who prays to the Virgin Mary and counts beads and the Chinaman who prays by sticking scented footpicks in a flower pot of dirt or the Bushman who prays by turning a wheel all have just as satisfactory returns from their prayers as you do.

I do not see any force in your story about the rabbit and the ass and the infidel. There are places in the world where there is too much food for animals and places where there are too many animals for the food. Why don't God put the food where the animals can get it? Is it a fact that infidels do not enjoy flowers as much as Christians do? I love flowers very much. I have a picture of Ingersoll showing a flower garden.

You certainly must appreciate the absurdity of your reasoning that God's making imperfect bodies for men is an evidence of God's own perfection, when you have just argued that making a jackass happy is an evidence of God's goodness.

Your statement that God is going to give us nice bodies hereafter is no consolation to us who do not believe in any God or any eternal life.

My children would not honor me for purposely withholding happiness from them now and telling them that I was going to make them happy in the future. Your prayer for me won't do me any good. Many good women who are better than any man have told me they were going to pray for me. It never made me any better. I would rather have one argument than a thousand prayers.

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